

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
TRSE-00 OMB-01 SSM-03 IO-13 ACDA-12 HA-05 /098 W  
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R 031348Z APR 78  
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0677  
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, IS, JO  
SUBJECT: WEST BANKERS MEET TIME GROUP

1. ALTHOUGH NO ONE FROM CONGEN WAS PRESENT AT RECENT BRIEFING GIVEN BY PALESTINIANS TO 30-ODD VISITING U.S. EXECUTIVES ON "TIME"-SPONSORED TOUR, WE HAVE GOTTEN SEVERAL REPORTS FROM WEST BANKERS WHO WERE PRESENT AND FROM LOCAL "TIME" CORRESPONDENT NEFF. (NEFF HAD SOLICITED POST'S ADVICE EARLIER ON APPROPRIATE WEST BANKERS TO BE INVITED.)

2. GROUP MET WITH WEST BANK/GAZA PERSONALITIES IN JERICHO SUNDAY AFTERNOON MARCH 26. AMONG APPROXIMATELY 20 PALESTINIANS PRESENT WERE MAYORS OF HEBRON, BETHLEHEM, GAZA, AL BIREH, HALHUL, AND ACTING MAYOR OF NABLUS (SHAKA HAD NOT RETURNED FROM ABROAD). ALSO UNRWA DISTRICT DIRECTORS FROM RAMALLAH AND NABLUS, ANWAY NUSEIBEH AND DR. NAFEZ NAZZAL OF BIR ZEIT.

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3. AFTER PREPARED REMARKS BY NUSEIBEH AND NAZZAL, MAYORS FREIJ (BETHLEHEM) AND SHAWWA (GAZA) SPOKE AT SOME LENGTH AND ALL REMAINING MAYORS APOKE BRIEFLY. COLLEGE STUDENTS FROM BIR ZEIT WERE ALSO PRESENT AND PARTICIPATED IN SUBSEQUENT QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD. GENERAL IMPRESSION WAS THAT ALL PALESTINIANS ACQUITTED THEMSELVES WELL EXPLAINING THEIR CASE

EFFECTIVELY YET MODERATELY.

4. EXECUTIVES PRESSED FOR ANSWER TO QUESTION "WHAT DO WEST BANKERS REALLY WANT?" ALTHOUGH REPLIES WERE LESS SPECIFIC THAN DESIRED, THE MAIN THEMES WERE:

- (A) WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAELIS,
- (B) SELF-DETERMINATION, AND
- (C) ACCEPTANCE OF INTERIM PERIOD.

ALL, EVEN MODERATES, INSISTED THAT ONLY PLO COULD REPRESENT ALL OF THE PALESTINIANS--INSIDE AND OUTSIDE WEST BANK/GAZA-- AND THAT ANY SOLUTION HAD TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT NEEDS OF ALL PALESTINIANS.

5. ONE OF MOST EFFECTIVE MOMENTS OF MEETING CAME DURING DISCUSSION OF SETTLEMENTS. GROUP HAD JUST BEEN TO ISRAELI JORDAN VALLEY SETTLEMENT PHATZAEI WHERE ISRAELI BRIEFER HAD CLAIMED THAT NO PRIVATE LAND HAD BEEN TAKEN. WHEN THIS POINT MENTIONED, NUSEIBEH ROSE TO SAY THAT HE HAD TO BEG TO DISAGREE AS SOME OF HIS OWN LAND WAS INCLUDED IN PHATZAEI SETTLEMENT.

6. WE HEARD SOME COMPLAINTS BY WEST BANKERS REGARDING "TIME'S" HANDLING OF ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS-- NONE OF PALESTINIANS INVITED WERE ADEQUATELY INFORMED WHAT MEETING WAS GOING TO BE. FOR EXAMPLE, NONE WERE GIVEN BEFOREHAND A LIST OF NAMES OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AMERICAN EXECUTIVES AND SOME MISTAKENLY THOUGHT GROUP WAS ONLY JOURNALISTS INSTEAD OF TOP-LEVEL EXECUTIVES.

7. ON OTHER HAND, "TIME" REP NEFF WAS FURIOUS WITH OFFICIAL ISRAELI ESCORTS WHO INSISTED ON REMAINING PRESENT THROUGHOUT BRIEFING SESSION INSTEAD OF LEAVING AS REQUESTED. AS A RESULT, NEFF THOUGHT THAT SOME OF THE SPEAKERS COULD UNDERSTANDABLY HAVE BEEN INHIBITED IN REMARKS. HE SPECIFICALLY ASKED CONSULATE GENERAL TO LET HIM KNOW IF ANY BIR ZEIT STUDENTS REPORT SUBSEQUENTLY BEING HARASSED BY ISRAELIS BECAUSE OF APPEARANCE.

8. COMMENT: OUR OVERALL IMPRESSION IS THAT "TIME" GROUP FOUND ENCOUNTER WITH WEST BANKERS INSTRUCTIVE AND RESULTED IN MORE SYMPATHETIC UNDERSTANDING OF PALESTINIAN PROBLEM. WE UNDERSTAND FROM NEFF THAT GROUP MET IN CORFU OVER PAST WEEKEND TO DISCUSS EVENTUAL REPORT WHICH SPOKESMAN (POSSIBLY LINOWITZ) WILL PRESENT TO WHITE HOUSE FOLLOWING TRIP.  
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